



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 TDD 401-222-4462

January 31, 2007

RE: Invitation to participate in a Storm Water Education and Outreach Program to meet Phase II permit requirements

Dear Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Storm Water Program Coordinator:

You are invited to participate in a Storm Water Education and Outreach Program, which is funded by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and designed to assist RI municipalities to meet the Phase II RIPDES permit requirements. Recognizing that public education and outreach programs can be developed more efficiently and cost effectively through a coordinated statewide effort, the Rhode Island Departments of Transportation (RIDOT) and Environmental Management (RIDEM) have partnered with the URI Cooperative Extension to provide training and technical support to municipalities. Our goal is to assist communities and other MS4 operators to develop effective stormwater management programs while making the most efficient use of limited resources.

Assistance Available for Municipalities and other MS4 Coordinators

Municipalities and other MS4s who choose to participate in this Stormwater Education and Outreach program will receive training and educational resources focusing on education and outreach to meet permit requirements. RIDEM, RIDOT and URI Cooperative Extension will work with a project Advisory Committee to offer the following assistance with minimal expense to the MS4:

- Develop consistent educational materials and outreach methods that MS4s and other local groups can use to implement a community stormwater education program that addresses stormwater problems affecting local water bodies.
- Provide training for municipal staff and local officials in municipal pollution prevention and updated stormwater management practices.
- Provide model ordinances and enforceable policies for local stormwater control, with related training and educational materials to support their adoption and implementation.

Timeframe

Training activities will be scheduled and local educational materials developed primarily from January 2007 to the December 2008 Phase II permit compliance deadline, but may continue beyond that period if necessary to meet local needs.

What's Involved for Municipalities and other MS4s:

To ensure educational products are tailored to local needs, participating Municipalities and other MS4s will be actively involved and responsible for the following activities:

- Coordinate with URI and other municipalities and MS4s through a local work group. Since our goal is to streamline compliance with Phase II obligations we will keep requests for information

and meetings to a minimum. Communication will be primarily by email, mail or telephone with infrequent meetings when necessary.

- Respond to requests for information on Phase II activities from URI and RIDEM.
- Review and comment on draft educational materials developed by URI.
- Participate in training programs and/or promote attendance by appropriate municipal staff and local officials.
- Implement a public education and outreach program using educational materials and outreach strategies developed under this project with input from participating municipalities.

Note: Up to this point the measurable goals for public education and outreach (Minimum Measure #1) have been generically defined in the General Permit and annual reporting requirements have been minimal. With this assistance program, we have outlined the measurable goals in the form of minimum requirements for participation in this program to meet education and outreach needs. These minimum requirements and supporting project tasks are outlined in the enclosed table "Minimum Requirements for Public Education & Outreach." This is a preliminary list, which we will refine with input from participating municipalities as the educational materials and delivery methods are developed. Our work is also subject to review and approval of a project steering committee composed of state agency staff, MS4 operators, consulting professionals and non-profit organizations.

Benefits for Participating Municipalities / MS4s in Meeting Phase II Obligations

- **Regulated Municipalities (MS4s)** who choose to participate in this Stormwater Education and Outreach Program and implement storm water education and involvement measures, as outlined in the enclosed table, will receive credit for fully satisfying Minimum Control Measure #1 (Public education and outreach). Because other Phase II required measures have educational components, these municipalities will also receive at least partial credit towards meeting Minimum Measures 2 through 6.
- **Non-traditional MS4s**, such as universities and other public agencies, are welcome to participate in the program and receive similar credit towards meeting minimum measures. However, because this assistance is aimed toward municipal officials these MS4s will be responsible for adapting educational materials and enforceable policies to suit their own needs.
- **Unregulated Municipalities** - Foster, Hopkinton, Little Compton, New Shoreham, and Richmond - will require storm water Phase II permits by March 10, 2008 unless demonstrating effective protection of Special Resource Protection Waters and Impaired waters. For these communities, participation in this program will provide resources and support to meet these protection requirements through low-cost public education measures and basic updates to stormwater management provisions of local ordinances and enforceable policies.
- **Participation is voluntary.** Communities who elect not to participate in this program or fail to meet minimum requirements for participation must demonstrate equivalent compliance with measurable goals. Be aware that upon receipt of the Year 3 (2006) Annual Report, RIDEM will perform a complete compliance review of the SWMPP for Minimum Measures 1 & 2.

Next Steps

- Please take 10 minutes to complete the enclosed Commitment Form/Cooperative Agreement. If you choose to participate in the Program, the enclosed Commitment Form/Cooperative Agreement will become an **Amendment** to your permit application.

- Please sign and mail the completed Commitment Form/Cooperative Agreement to RIDEM **with the Annual Report by March 10, 2007.**

RIDEM - Office of Water Resources
RIPDES Program - Permitting Section
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

- URI will be sending you a Needs Assessment Survey in the mail under separate cover. Please complete this survey as directed, as **the completed survey is REQUIRED for participation in this Program.** Your input will help us direct technical support to best meet your needs. URI will summarize results of the survey and begin forwarding to you or your designee(s) information on training programs and draft outreach materials. Should you choose NOT to participate in the Program, **please complete the survey anyway**, as it will help us to get a comprehensive idea of the needs of the State's MS4s.
- All attached documents may be downloaded at:
<http://www.state.ri.us/dem/programs/benviron/water/permits/ripdes/stwater/index.htm>.

Contacts

We look forward to working with you to develop methods for implementing local stormwater management programs that are both creative and cost effective. If you have any questions, please contact Eric Beck, Supervising Sanitary Engineer, RIDEM RIPDES Permitting, or any other project staff member listed below.

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Sincerely,

Eric A. Beck, P.E.
Supervising Engineer
Office of Water Resources
RIPDES Program

cc: Highest Elected Official (w/o attachments)

Enclosures:

Minimum Requirements for Public Education & Outreach

Commitment Form/Cooperative Agreement